

## **Potomac LAC Meeting Minutes**

Feb 18, 2025

### **LAC Member Attendees**

Gael Cheek (virtual)  
Don Libes, Secretary  
Sheila Graves, Co-chair  
Karen Grimm  
Rosemarie Lentini  
Patty McGrath (virtual)  
Michael Namath  
Cara Seitchek (virtual)  
Caitlyn Jennings, grad student  
Roger Williams

### **LAC Member Absentees**

Mary Ammermann, Co-chair  
Sylvia Diss  
Ella Hu  
Millie Kahn  
Wei Lu (resigned)  
Anne Ma  
Carole Ottesen, previous 3 meetings missed  
Mallory Starr, previous 3 meetings missed

### **Other Regular Attendees**

Patrick Fromm, Regional Mgr for Potomac, Chevy Chase, Little Falls; Interim Asst Dir for Programming and Outreach

### **Other Attendees**

None

### **Other Absences**

Jim Montgomery, MC Library Board Liaison  
Nancy Samson, Branch Supervisor

### **Names and abbreviations (unofficial, for convenience and clarity)**

FOLMC: Friends of the Library, Montgomery County (old)  
Friends or OneFOL: One FOLMC (new)  
FOLPatrick: Friends of the Library, Potomac Chapter (old)  
FOPL: Friends of the Potomac Library (new)  
PL: Potomac Library  
MCLB: Montgomery County Library Board

plac: Potomac LAC mail list

### **Chair and Member Updates**


Sheila called meeting to order at 7:00pm. Agenda previously distributed by Sheila via plac.

Although there was sufficient overall attendance for a quorum, there was no instantaneous time during which there was a quorum (due to members arriving late and members leaving early), so no actions would be taken.

New LAC member Caitlyn volunteered at library for 8 years. Looking to work for MC Parks.  
LAC member Wei Lu resigned.

### **Minutes from Previous LAC Meeting**

Minutes from previous meeting not approved due to lack of quorum.

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### **Patrick Fromm, Regional Manager Report**

Patrick: Grandreaders (elders reading to children) still working with Jewish Council for Aging. Runs in summer. Will continue to look into PL participation in the program.

Sheila: When might we hear a call for volunteers?

Patrick: PL won't do it. You'll hear calls from JCA. Or you can contact them. But it is probably premature.

Patrick: Filling additional role: Interim Asst Dir for Programming and Outreach. A lot more work for me.

Gael: Sounds like very different roles. Are we going to lose you?

Pat: Unclear but probably not. I have given up Connie Morella and Davis from my Regional Manager duties for now.

Patrick: Had promised to put LAC chairs in touch with another but decided to be cautious exchanging emails since mostly I have only personal emails. However, I have started with two people.

Patrick: Children's programs are so successful, we've been getting noise complaints about the children's area.

Roger: Did design team consider this during the redesign?

Patrick: Yes, it was considered. This noise is not a fault of the building. There are just so many children. We'll have to be more alert and go over to the children's area to have them quiet down and stop jumping off cushions.

Don: Any update on LAC transcripts?

Patrick: Haven't heard anything back from Board yet.

Patrick presented last 2 years of PL checkout data for physical materials. PL has solid numbers compared to all branches. Electronic checkouts have even higher demand compared to physical materials.

Hoopla was getting to be too expensive so limits have been lowered from 10 to 5. MCPL is 3rd in the world for Hoopla usage.

Some people love CDs but CD players are going away. It's a tradeoff that we're dealing with.

PL patrons love to browse short-term.

PL showed foot traffic. Zeros for holidays or when counters were knocked down.

Patty: Can there be a charge for book recordings? This is an issue for book clubs and lack of availability forcing me to get on a wait list or buy the book outright. Can't we give the library some money instead of, say, Audible? Can we donate money to the library?

Patrick: Some libraries have "premium" cards that accomplish that. But I don't know that MCPL will ever go that route.

Patrick: We have shifted some resources to a "free" model. But we're tied up with council funding issues. But people with means are expected to buy outside. People without those means are stuck.

Rosemarie: Does that similarly apply to Libby?

Patrick: Libby operates the same way as our physical collection. We buy licenses for the titles and then they have a limit on number of items that can be borrowed. (Libby's cost is much lower cost per use than Hoopla.) Ebooks simply cost more than hardcopy. Lots of articles have been written on this issue.

Patrick: MCPL is not alone. For instance, Enoch Pratt cut down their Hoopla borrows.

Don: What's the payment model for resources such as Washington Post and Wall Street Journal? I recently dropped my personal Post subscription to send a message to the publisher and have turned to relying on MCPL which merely requires me to log in weekly to continue access. But if MCPL pays per subscriber and a lot of patrons do the same thing, this could be expensive enough that MCPL might drop the resource. On the other hand, if MCPL pays a fixed amount, the Post might notice the large number of customers and either raise MCPL's rate, drop it entirely, or limit access in some way a la Hoopla. What's the right thing to do to protect access?

Patrick: You're doing the right thing.

Patrick: Potomac is right in the middle of branches for # of programming events., 83 events, 2253 participants in Dec 1 to Jan 31.

### **Jim Montgomery, MC Library Board Liaison Report**

No report since Jim did not attend.

### **Old Business**

None.

## **New Business & Misc Discussion**

Rosemarie: Could you tell us about Canopy?

Patrick: Canopy is the same model as Hoopla. 10 borrows/month. Great resource for documentaries, indies, and passes for TV series.

Sheila: Suggestion for another program: Tax Changes

Patrick: We have tax prep programs with several groups such as AARP.

The Commission for Women does one for Medicaid twice a year.

Patty: What happened to Acorn?

Patrick: Overdrive and Hoopla took over Acorn but with Overdrive getting most of it.

Gael: Flyer about our new feedback discussion group is now in the library. And I experimented by posting about comfortable chairs in the lobby. Comfy chairs are important. Our new library director even said so in her recent presentation.

Don: There are 2 chairs currently in the lobby.

Sheila: There used to be a couch.

Patrick: Yes, director said so. We'll look at it. Where would the seating go? If you have suggestions, let us hear.

Patrick: It's remarkable to hear criticism of PL. Talk to Connie Morrella. They want to know why CM can't look more like PL.

Gael: What happened to the chairs that used to be in the lobby?

Patrick: Probably disposed of during the refurb.

Sheila: Where is the feedback discussion group flyer located? I looked for the flyer but couldn't find it.

Gael: Needs to be placed more prominently.

Patrick: I'll talk to Nancy.

Rosemarie: I suggested a whiteboard. That would be a great place to post notice of the group.

Everyone: Lobby is too sterile.

Patrick: Will look into it. Let me know suggestions to improve it.

Don: Could notice of the feedback group be added to the emails of monthly programs?

Patrick: Wasn't this asked in the past?

Don: Yes, and we were told the monthly program emails could not be customized. I was just hoping this unnecessarily restrictive policy might have changed.

**Meeting adjourned: 8:15pm**